

ROBOT WARS™ CLUB

ISSUE 1

**MAKING THE
TV SERIES**

**MEET THE
HOUSE
ROBOTS**

**MEET THE
AMERICAN
CHAMPIONS**

**YOUR CHANCE
TO WIN
TICKETS TO
THE FILMING
OF THE NEXT
SERIES**

**GREAT
OFFERS
ON
WARRIOR
WEAR**

**HOW
ROAD
BLOCK
WON THE
UK FINAL**



Welcome to the ROBOT WARS™ CLUB!

Robot Wars is a competitive sport featuring radio controlled fighting machines in combat – a survival of the fittest in which teams and individuals design, build and control robots in competition. Or if you prefer, Robot Wars puts the scrap back into metal!

Robot Wars originated as a live spectator sport in America four years ago and has been staged as an annual event in San Francisco ever since. And now, the mechanised mayhem of Robot Wars has been brought to British TV screens in a hit entertainment show for the BBC. Six pneumatically driven programmes were recorded in November 1997 and were broadcast at the beginning of this year to critical and viewer acclaim. Over 4.5 million tuned into the titanic battles of Robot Wars™ each week and a second series is already in production. Up to 18 episodes – including a 'Making of Robot Wars' documentary and coverage of this year's American event – will be on your screens in November.

The Robot Wars Club has been set up to bring you the very latest news and developments from the world of Robot Wars – details of official events, exclusive merchandising offers, advice from experts, news from competitions around the world, updates on the TV programme and much, much more. The club is also the forum for you to keep in touch with each other and with us. We want you to have your say. So let us know if you'd like to see anything particular featured in this newsletter, send us your ideas and designs, let us know what you think of the club – good and bad!

With your support and enthusiasm, Robot Wars is destined to become one of the greatest spectator sports the world has ever seen. So thanks for your interest, stay safe and happy roboteeing!

Scott Wilson

Scott Wilson, Editor

ROBOT WARS™ TRIVIA

- 36 teams – made up of 155 robotees – were featured in the first series of Robot Wars.
- Plans to feature famous robots such as K9, Daleks, R2-D2 and Metal Mickey were abandoned because of disagreement over payment fees. K9 will not get out of his kennel for anything less than a four figure sum.
- A lot of the metal featured in the set originated from an aircraft grave yard where planes such as Tornados are scrapped.
- The springs featured in The Gauntlet were in fact from juggernaut suspension systems.
- The balls featured in robotic snooker were cunningly disguised ball cocks salvaged from old toilets.
- During the course of the production the following was consumed: 6000 Cups of Tea, 1500 Bacon Rolls, 7500 Chocolate Biscuits, 1200 Rounds of Sandwiches, 78 Gallons of Milk, 600 Litres of Mineral Water, 17 kgs of Sugar, 1100 Sausages and 1600 Cakes.

MAKING WAR!

THE MAKING OF THE TV SHOW...

Bringing Robot Wars to your TV screens has been no easy task. The programme took three years to develop and involved over one hundred people. This is their story...

THE DEVELOPMENT

Robot Wars has been an annual American event since August 1994. In March 1995, independent production company Merton-Barracough-Carey began development of the TV version of Robot Wars. Armed with a VHS of the American event they embarked on an intensive two week period of research, contacting technical experts, radio-control enthusiasts, university departments and designers. Whilst the American event was based solely on combat, it was decided that a long running TV series would need more variety – in terms of rounds, challenges and games – to appeal to a large, mainstream audience and to sustain itself for years and years as an international format. Assault courses were conceived, competitive structures considered, games designed and potential robotees contacted. And although the format would change again many times, the core ideas remained. Two weeks and numerous phone calls later the first written proposal for Robot Wars was presented to the BBC. And then there was silence...



THE PILOT

...for a while. Of course, the BBC had seen a number of videos of the American event, but there's nothing quite like feeling the ground rumble, seeing the shrapnel fly and smelling the oil burn in person. And so in August of 1995 pre-production began on a Robot Wars™ pilot. Four British robots were hurriedly built and three American robots were invited to take part in what quickly became known as the '1995 British Robot Wars' Championships. A prototype assault course was built from over five hundred tyres courtesy of the local Kwik Fit. Five-a-side goal posts were borrowed from a local sports centre for the world's first game of robotic soccer. And a diamond configured arena was prepared for battle. As well as presenting the idea of Robot Wars™ to various BBC Executives – including Michael Jackson, the then Controller of BBC2 and now Chief Executive of Channel 4 – it was decided to use the opportunity to start raising the profile of Robot Wars™ generally. Consequently a number of news crews, journalists and



photographers attended the showcase alongside an invited audience of over three hundred people. They crowded into the cold, but atmospheric warehouse opposite BBC TV Centre and enjoyed an evening of carnage and robotic destruction presented by Dominik 'GamesMaster' Diamond. The American entries – La Machine, Thor and The Master – put on an impressive display and were worthy robotic ambassadors. In contrast, the British robots were well and truly whipped – but at least survived to fight another day. The BBC were impressed. And then there was silence...

THE PRODUCTION

...followed by negotiations, budget discussions and aborted start dates. In January 1997 a small production team began the uphill struggle of recruiting teams for the series. Thankfully schools, universities, special effects experts, businesses and radio control enthusiasts all rallied to the cause – even though they were being asked to commit their time, energy and money to a completely unknown programme! Recording dates were fixed for November 1997 and over the following months the real work began. Key production people were recruited, music and graphics were created, sets were designed, robotees were advised and presenters chosen. Eventually, six shows were recorded in a large warehouse complex in the Docklands (East London) over a period of one week. Of course problems were encountered along the way – not least Jeremy and Philippa having to endure an ice cold caravan each morning, robots breaking down constantly and inexhaustible robotees wanting to tinker with their robots all night. But teething problems aside, the production went remarkably well.

The lengthy process of editing the shows began immediately to ensure that the BBC would be able to broadcast the series in February 1998 as scheduled. How well would the show do? Whilst producers, directors and editors were busying themselves in edit suites, most of the production team could only sit back and wait nervously. Thankfully, over 4.5 million people watched the first show, and the rest – as they say – is history!



ROAD BLOCK

UK ROBOT WARS™ CHAMPION



THE TEAM: Hender Blewett (17), Chris Kinsey (16), Peter Kinsey (49)

Q What made you want to take up the challenge of Robot Wars?

A The application form arrived at the same time as I (Hender) was trying to think of an A-Level project. The two seemed to go hand in hand, and when we were approved by Robot Wars and the examining body, we were able to start building!

Q How did you come up with your design for Road Block?

A The theme for the robot was based around road signs, and we wanted to give it an industrial feel, the major design features came from the best of the American, with our added power as a secret weapon.

Q Which was your favourite part of the competition?

A It was just good to be there and take part, especially as many of our supporters had come from Cornwall, as spectators. However, taking on the House Robots™ was great fun.

Q What was your biggest triumph?

A Our triumphant moment had to be when we flipped Sergeant Bash right over. We put the power to good use. He was not pleased. But that didn't matter.

Q Who was your most awesome opponent?

A Nemesis was not as friendly as we had imagined. His tongue did more damage than we expected. We decided to strip him of his fur coat, cook him and give him a good hiding.

Q Which was your most favourite House Robot?

A Shunt was our favourite House Robot: he has huge power, good looks and an aggressive axe. There were times when he could have taken us in the Sumo ring, but he made a mistake and we took advantage of it.

Q What advice would you give someone wanting to build a robot?

A The best advice is to be methodical, well prepared, organised; the rest should come naturally. Testing is important, if it looks like it will break, then it will. Rebuild it four times as strong, then try to break it. If you can, then you know a House Robot can.

Q How long did it take to build Road Block?

A It took two months to build, but it was running after one.

Q What kept you inspired?

A The video of the American event was very inspiring and the production team kept us going!

Q What was the hardest part of the construction?

A The hardest and most trying time was constructing the speed controllers, which failed all the time. On the eleventh attempt we succeeded.

Q What was the atmosphere like in the pits?

A The atmosphere in the pits was half of the show. The banter between competitors was good fun and better equipped teams helped out robotees that were experiencing problems. The pressure to finish and repair robots although exhilarating and fun, also becomes very stressful at times.

Q Which other competitor's robot did you rate?

A Nemesis, Morris, Bodyhammer and Recyclique were among the best of the bunch.

Q Do you have any plans to build another robot?

A We would like to defend our title next year.

Q What motors, speed controllers, batteries etc did you use?

A We used our own home built speed controllers, running from 2 x 12v batteries and driving two electric motors on each wheel.

Q What would you do differently?

A We would hope to have more speed, and stronger bodywork – but on the whole, not a lot.

Q Did you enjoy watching Robot Wars on TV?

A It was great fun watching Road Block on TV and we thought the show was very entertaining and original.

MEET THE HOUSE ROBOTS™

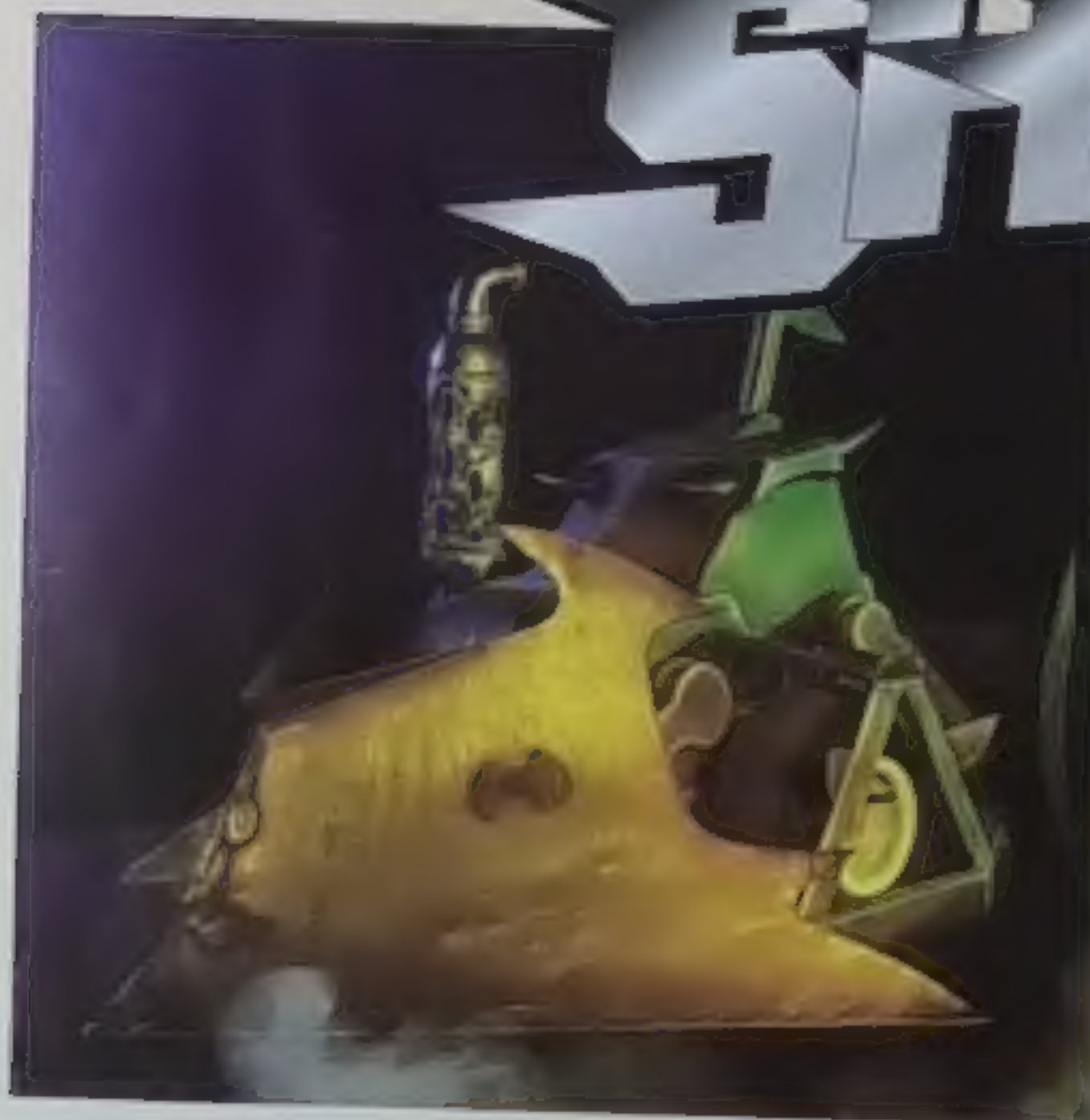
The House Robots, deadly fighting machines and the stars of Robot Wars™.

The power packed Shunt, strong enough to pull a Land Rover and featuring a deadly axe which can cleave all opponents in two. Dead Metal with pneumatically driven pincers and a ferocious circular saw. The matriarchal Matilda with a fearsome chainsaw tail and titanium body armour. And finally Sergeant Bash with a circular saw revving at over 3000 rpm and a ferocious flame thrower certain to leave all opponents hot under the collar. We think we know them, but their origins remain a mystery...

Of course there are theories, opinions, assumptions – but no hard facts. Some experts insist that the House Robots have been sent back in time from a robotic dictatorship in the distant future. Their mission? To sabotage the symbiotic relationship between man and machine. Others have argued that Sergeant Bash, Matilda, Dead Metal and Shunt were developed as part of an aborted military experiment. Such pacifists insist that the House Robots are in fact prototypes, created to end human suffering on the battlefield by replacing soldiers with war machines. And then there are more fanciful theories which imply that they were in fact built by the BBC's Visual Effects department.

The only thing we can be certain of is that we just don't know. Perhaps we will never know? Perhaps we weren't meant to? However, extensive scientific analysis and field testing has at least revealed the following...

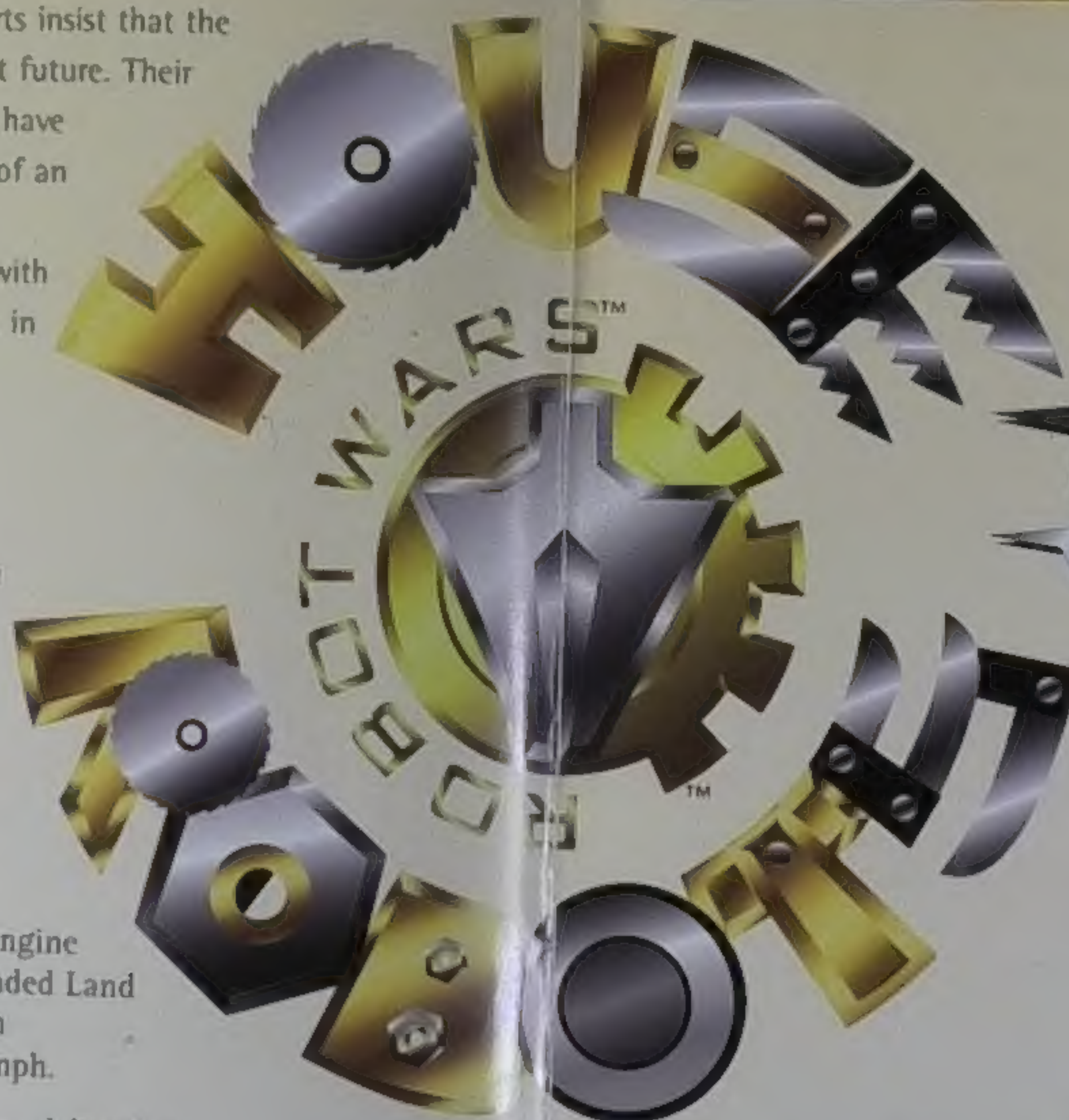
SHUNT™



POWER Prototype cold fusion engine capable of dragging a fully loaded Land Rover from a standing position up to a maximum speed of 6 mph.

WEAPONRY A diamond edged axe delivering a blow of 500kg per square centimetre.

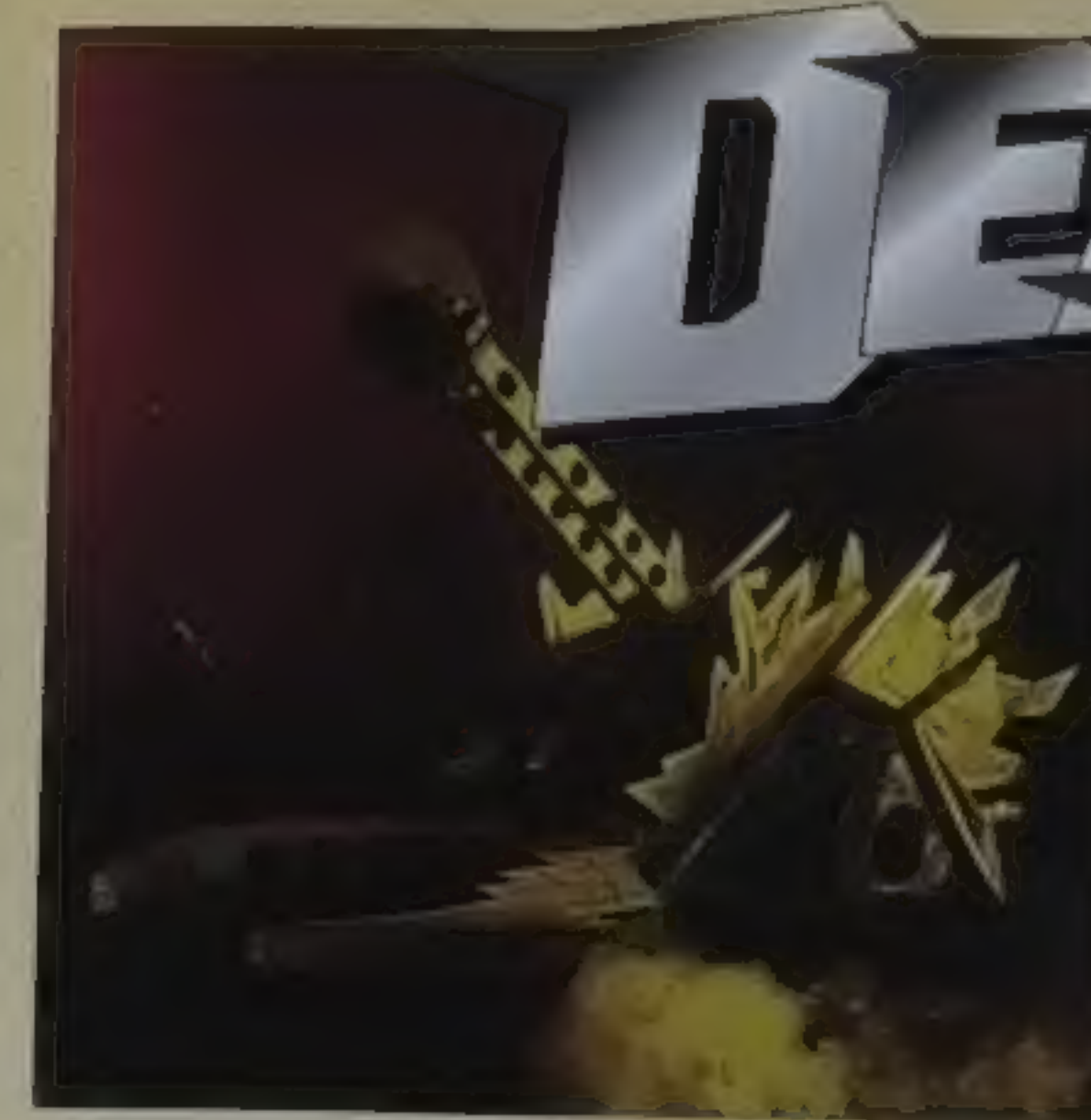
WEIGHT	105kg
LENGTH	51in/130cm
WIDTH	43in/110cm
HEIGHT	28in/70cm
SPEED	10MPH



MATILDA™



DEAD METAL™



POWER Battery driven engine with thermonuclear starter motor.

WEAPONRY Pneumatically driven pincers and an adjustable circular saw revving at over 3000 rpm.

WEIGHT	112kg
LENGTH	63in/160cm
WIDTH	39in/100cm
HEIGHT	28in/70cm
SPEED	12MPH

SERGEANT BASH™



POWER Four batteries running in parallel. Conduits attached to flame thrower vent heat to power steam engine.

WEAPONRY Propane fuelled flame thrower mounted on a 360° turret and steam driven circular saw running at 3200 rpm.

WEIGHT	120kg
LENGTH	55in/140cm
WIDTH	36in/90cm
HEIGHT	36in/90cm
SPEED	8MPH

WEIGHT	116kg
LENGTH	55in/140cm
WIDTH	26in/66cm
HEIGHT	26in/66cm
SPEED	8MPH

POWER Rechargeable battery unit.

WEAPONRY Hydraulic tusks and a chainsaw tail revving at 3000 rpm. Technicians have also speculated that Matilda's internal circuitry appears to be hormonally driven. Early tests suggest that both oestrogen and progesterone act as a catalyst to control levels of aggression during combat.

HOW TO BE A WARRIOR

There follows a summary of the rules and regulations which govern the construction and operation of fighting machines in Robot Wars. These regulations are an abbreviated version of the 'Official UK Rules and Guidelines (1998)' as written for the TV version of Robot Wars. Please do not start building your robot yet. If you have previously expressed an interest in building, you should now have received an official application form. Once you have completed and returned this, you will be contacted by the producers of Robot Wars in the UK. If you have been selected, you will then be sent all the rules, regulations, details and advice needed to start constructing the ultimate fighting machine!

WEIGHT CATEGORIES

5 to 25 lbs (up to 11.4 kg)	Featherweight Class
25 to 50 lbs (11.4 kg to 22.7 kg)	Lightweight Class
50 to 100 lbs (22.7 kg to 45.4 kg)	Middleweight Class
100 to 175 lbs (45.4 kg to 79.4 kg)	Heavyweight Class

OTHER RESTRICTIONS

The following materials and practices are prohibited: radio jamming, electronic weaponry (stun guns, tesla coils, soldering irons etc.), liquid weaponry (water, oil, glue etc.), all physical interference between contestants, gas based weaponry (expandable foam, neon etc.) and flying robots that make use of an airfoil for lift, although electric powered floating robots are permitted.

All rules and guidelines are subject to change. Contestants who fail to adhere to rules and guidelines may be subject to disqualification. Please do not start building a robot until you have been officially asked to by the producers of Robot Wars™ in the UK.

SAFETY RESTRICTIONS

All explosives, corrosives, flames and pyrotechnics are prohibited. Untethered projectiles are prohibited. All lasers above 1mw-class 2 are prohibited. Compressed gas limited to 1000 psi. Hydraulic fluid is limited to 3000 psi.

POWER

Fuel or electric. Fuel capacity limited to the lesser of 8oz or 6 minutes operating time. Fuel tanks must be adequately protected against penetration.

SAFETY

Robots will be inspected for safety and reliability before being allowed to compete. Guidelines are set to ensure safe construction and operation and must be adhered to at all times. Tethers, blades, arms, levers, air cylinders and all other mechanical parts and weaponry must be strong, shatter proof and secure. The organisers and producers reserve the right to disqualify any entry at their discretion.

FREE
DRAW

WIN TICKETS TO ATTEND THE FILMING OF THE SECOND SERIES OF ROBOT WARS™

Would you like to come along and see the second series of Robot Wars being filmed? We are filming for three weeks from 17th August to 5th September in London

Simply write your Robot Wars Club membership number on a post card and send it to

Robot Wars Club, London W1R 1RB

The first 100 pulled out of the hat will win 2 tickets to attend the filming. We will then send you the tickets by July 24th, giving you plenty of time to make your travel arrangements

Postcards must be received by 17th July 1998

WINNING WARRIORS FROM THE



Here, in all their mechanical glory, are some of the most famous fighting machines in the world today – robots such as *The Master*, *La Machine*, *Biohazard* and *The Agamemnon*. These

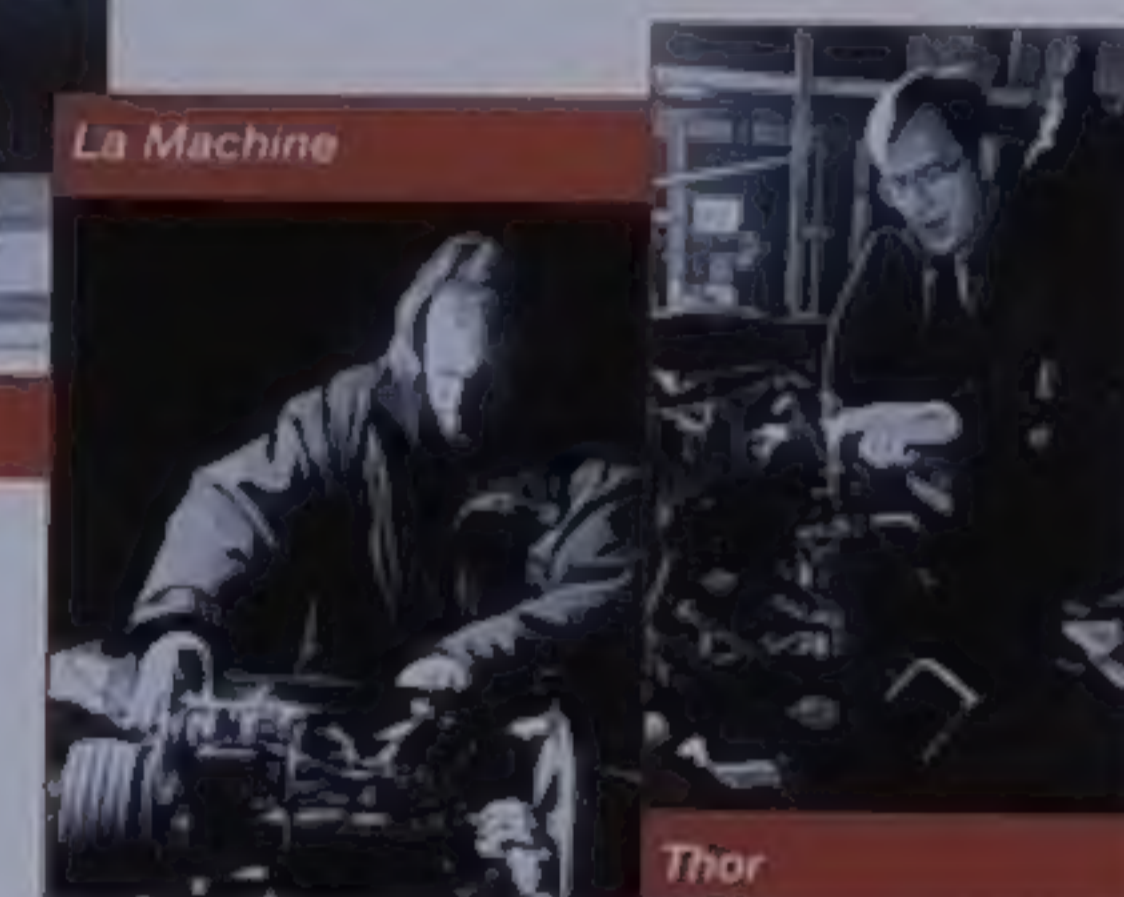
reigning and former champions all hail from America and we caught up with their creators to find out just what we've let ourselves in for...



The Master

THE MASTER

Created by Mark Setrakian
US Heavyweight Face-Off Champion (95)
US Heavyweight Melee Champion (95)
Best design (95)



La Machine

Thor

THOR

Created by Schilling Robotic Systems
US Best Engineering Award (95)

BIOHAZARD

BUILDER	Carlo Bertocchini
TEAM	Biohazard
CLASS	Heavyweight
CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES AND AWARDS	Heavyweight Face-Off (1996/97) Best Design (1996) Best Engineering (1996/97)
VITAL STATISTICS	Weight 77kg Length 107cm Width 76cm Height 11cm
FORM	Battles 12 Victories 10 Defeats 2
MISCELLANEOUS	Power Fully battery powered Weapons Two linear actuators power an arm to lift and overturn opposition Speed 6km/h

Carlo's Moment of Glory

My moment of glory was when they announced that I had won the trophy for best design and the trophy for best engineering in 1996.

Carlo's Moment of Despair

My worst moment was about one minute later when I lost in the Melee to La Machine.

Carlo's Advice for British Competitors

Start early. It takes a long time to make a quality machine. My technical advice is, be very aware of your weight limit. The trick is to pack the most power, the biggest weapon, and the thickest armour, while still staying below the limit. Biohazard '97 weighs 170lbs. Here is how I used that weight – batteries (25lbs), Drive Motors (15lbs), Titanium (30lbs), Magnesium (25lbs), Aluminium (20lbs), Steel (20 lbs), Linear Actuators (15 lbs), Wheels (10lbs), Electronics (5lbs), and Other (5lbs).

LA MACHINE

BUILDER	Trey Roski, Greg and Gar Munson
TEAM	La Machine
CLASS	Middleweight (1995) Heavyweight (1996/97)
CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES AND AWARDS	Middleweight Face-Off (1995) Middleweight Melee (1995) British Open Champion (1995) Heavyweight Melee (1995/96/97)
VITAL STATISTICS	Weight 77kg Length 91cm Width 76cm Height 46cm
FORM	Battles 33* Victories 31
MISCELLANEOUS	Power Fully battery powered Weapons Inertia, Kinetic Speed 30 km/h

* Battles: 19 in San Francisco, 1 in London 14 in Germany

Trey's Moment of Glory

Beating Biohazard in the 1995 Melee having just lost to him in the Face-Off final.

Trey's Moment of Despair

Losing to Biohazard in the 1995 face-off final – a damaged motor had gone unnoticed.

Trey's Advice for British Competitors

Firstly, practice driving your robot – lots of people tend to concentrate on building the machines but not on their driving skills. And secondly, get out of the way!

THE AGAMEMNON

BUILDER	Dan Danknick
TEAM	Team Delta
CLASS	Middleweight
CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES AND AWARDS	Middleweight Face-Off (1996) Middleweight Melee (1996)
VITAL STATISTICS	Weight 46 kg Length 107 cm Width 66 cm Height 27 cm
FORM	Battles 4 Victories 4
MISCELLANEOUS	Power Sealed lead acid-gel Weapons 2 steel cutting saws and an air punch Speed 13 km/h

Dan's Moment of Glory

Sinking 3000RPM saw blades into the wooden shell of my second match-up and seeing sawdust rooster-tail up into the air.

Dan's Moment of Despair

Trying to entertain the audience by repeatedly bashing the same opponent into submission, then high-centering on his shell, rendering my robot immobile by suspending all six wheels off the ground. That's what I get for trying to be entertaining!

Dan's Advice for British Competitors

Engineer for reliability. Period. A neat looking robot that isn't resilient is destined for failure. In every battle that I won, my opponent suffered some sort of subsystem collapse. In contrast, I took apart every motor, gear reduction unit and assembly to identify weak parts. The upshot of this was that my worst damage was a broken aluminium weld in a non-critical area. Oh, and a scratched American flag sticker.

WARRIOR WEAR

Robot Wars Club has produced a selection of Robot Wars merchandise available exclusively for Club members.

**HIGH QUALITY BLACK T-SHIRTS
FEATURING THE ROBOT WARS LOGO
PRINTED IN FULL COLOUR FRONT AND
BACK***

BLACK SHORT SLEEVE T-SHIRT

Available in small, medium, large & XL
Club price **£8.99**
Post & packing **91p**

ROBOT WARS LOGO ENAMEL LAPEL BADGE*

Club price **£1.99**
Post & packing **31p**

BOMBER JACKET*

Traditional nylon bomber jacket with satin
nylon lining with knitted rib collar, cuffs
and waistband, embroidered on the back
with the Robot Wars logo.

Club price **£49.95**
Post & packing **£5.38**

41 FULL COLOUR POSTERS FEATURING THE HOUSE ROBOTS*

Pick your favourite from
**SERGEANT BASH, MATILDA,
DEAD METAL, SHUNT...**

or have all four!

Club Price **£2.99**
Post & packing **£1.00**



RECORD BAG*

Quality heavyweight nylon
black record bag with
adjustable shoulder strap,
Velcro fastener, inside
pocket and grip handle on
top plus pen compartments
to side. (approx. size 26 x
10 x 34cm) With Robot
Wars logo embroidered on
the front over flap.

Club price **£14.99**
Post & packing **£1.80**



ROBOT WARS BASEBALL CAP*

Quality brushed cotton black baseball
cap, complete with beige coloured
suede peak and adjustable fabric
strap with buckle fastening with
Robot Wars logo embroidered
on the front.

Club price **£9.99**
Post & packing **58p**

ORDER FORM

Prices quoted include post
& packing for UK only.

I WOULD LIKE TO ORDER

Product	Club Price	Size (s, m, l, xl)	Qty
T-SHIRT	£9.90	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BOMBER JACKET	£55.33	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BADGE	£2.30		<input type="checkbox"/>
BASEBALL CAP	£10.58		<input type="checkbox"/>
RECORD BAG	£16.79		<input type="checkbox"/>
POSTERS			
SERGEANT BASH	£3.99		<input type="checkbox"/>
MATILDA	£3.99		<input type="checkbox"/>
DEAD METAL	£3.99		<input type="checkbox"/>
SHUNT	£3.99		<input type="checkbox"/>
SET OF 4 POSTERS	£13.96		<input type="checkbox"/>

TOTAL VALUE OF ORDER £

Enclosed cheque/postal order made payable
to Robot Wars for
or debit my
Mastercard/Visa Card for

£

£

Expiry date Valid from

Signature

Name

Address

Town

Post Code

Club Membership Number

If you do not wish to receive any further information or offers from either
companies which we think might be of interest to you, please tick box ☐

Please allow 28 days for delivery. Send to Robot Wars Club, Premier House, London W1E 1AW